



Improving Health & Equity for Austin Children

Item H-23

Access to Healthy Food in Public Schools

This would establish a Food Policy Board-recommended program to increase healthy food access in schools.

- Under this proposal, the Office of Sustainability would provide \$100,000 in grants to local schools to help them develop and implement strategies for increasing access to healthy food, including innovative delivery methods.
- Office of Sustainability staff estimates that at this funding level, they will be able to provide roughly five grants.¹

Healthy food is vital to children's health and ability to learn.

- According to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, research shows that access to healthy foods is associated with improving students' academic performance, school attendance rates, and cognitive performance.²
- However, many Austin students face food security challenges. (See Table.)

This program would help address food security issues in local schools.

- The Food Policy Board recommended this strategy as a way to help schools implement innovative food delivery methods & supplement existing needs.³
- The City of Austin currently works with the Austin Independent School District (AISD) on healthy food initiatives. This item would leverage that experience to help non-AISD schools build out their food access capacity, as well.

Table 1. Pct. Free/Reduced Lunch-Eligible Students, 2015

School District	Pct. Free/Reduced Lunch
Del Valle	84%
Manor	81%
Austin	66%
Pflugerville	55%
Round Rock	31%
Leander	22%

Source: Office of Sustainability Staff

Item H-21

Access to Playgrounds for Children with Disabilities

**Table 2. ADA Project Needs
(Over 10 Years)**

District	Facilities/Parks ADA Needs
1	\$4.8 million
2	\$941,000
3	\$3.3 million
4	\$882,000
5	\$2 million
6	\$691,000
7	\$1.3 million
8	\$3.1 million
9	\$4.6 million
10	\$1.1 million
Trails	\$58.5 million

Source: PARD ADA Transition Plan

This proposal would make key accessibility improvements at 10 parks.

- This would provide \$1 million to the Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) to serve Austin children living with disabilities & bring 10 city playgrounds into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

PARD manages a large parks system – but needs more resources to keep it accessible to residents of all abilities.

- PARD is responsible for maintaining about 300 parks, 150 playgrounds, and 220 miles of trails, many of which are not fully ADA compliant.⁴
- The city's ADA Transition Plan for parks identifies over \$80 million in projects recommended to be implemented over the next decade (See Table.)

This proposal has broad community support.

- A broad coalition of parks advocates and residents, including the Austin Parks Foundation, identified as a priority for the fiscal year 2018 budget.⁵

¹ Office of Sustainability Staff.

² "Health and Academic Achievement," U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (May 2014).

³ Food Policy Board Recommendation 20170522-2.

⁴ "Parks & Recreation Department Review Presentation," City of Austin Parks & Recreation Department (22 March 2017).

⁵ Letter to Mayor and Council from Austin Parks Foundation, et al. (28 June 2017).